

In the claims:

Please **amend** the claims 29, 33, 37 and 41-53 as follows:

29. (Amended Four Times) A music data processing apparatus connecting to an external device via a public communications line and processing music data received from the external device via the public communications line, comprising:

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GI a receiver that receives music data containing first time information representing first time from said external device via the public communications line;

a setting device that sets second time as second time information for the music data processing apparatus by subtracting a *delay time* predetermined value from said first time;

a memory that temporarily stores the music data received by said receiver; and

a processor that periodically counts up said second time information and starts processing the music data temporarily stored in said memory when said second time information reaches said first time information.

33. (Amended Four Times) A music data processing method performed by a music data processing apparatus connecting to an external device via a public communications line and processing music data received from the external device via the public communications line, said method comprising the steps of:

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- (a) receiving music data containing first time information representing first time from said external device via the public communications line;
 - (b) setting second time as second time information for the music data processing apparatus by subtracting a predetermined value from said first time;
 - (c) temporarily storing the music data received by said receiving step;
 - (d) periodically counting up said second time information; and
 - (e) starting to process the music data temporarily stored in said storing step when said second time information reaches said first time information.

37. (Amended Four Times) A storage medium storing a program, which a computer executes to realize a music data process for a music data processing apparatus connecting to an external device via a public communications line and processing music data received from the external device via the public communications line, comprising the instructions for:

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- (a) receiving music data containing first time information representing first time from said external device via the public communications line;
 - (b) setting second time as second time information for the music data processing apparatus by subtracting a predetermined value from said first time;
 - (c) temporarily storing the music data received by said receiving step;
 - (d) periodically counting up said second time information; and
 - (e) starting to process the music data temporarily stored in said storing step when said second time information reaches said first time information.

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41. (Amended Three Times) A music data processing apparatus connecting to an external device via a public communications line, comprising:

a receiver that receives music data containing first time information from said external device via the public communications line;

a judging device that judges whether said received music data is specific data or not;

a controlling device that rectifies said first time information by a predetermined value and sets the rectified first time information as second time information for the music data processing apparatus when said judging device judges said received music data is specific data and does not set the first time information as the second time information when said judging device judges said received music data is not specific data;

a memory that temporarily stores said received music data;

a processor that counts up the second time information periodically and processes the stored music data in accordance with said counted up second time information and the first time information contained in the music data to be processed.

42. (Twice Amended) A music data processing apparatus according to claim 41, wherein said first time information contained in the music data received from the external device is absolute time added at the external device.

43. (Twice Amended) A music data processing apparatus according to claim 41, wherein said receiver further receives a value for rectifying the first time information from the external device, and

said controlling device rectifies said first time information with said received value.

44. (Twice Amended) A music data processing apparatus according to claim 41, further comprising a determiner that determines the predetermined value for rectifying the first time information in accordance with capacity of said memory for storing the received music data, and wherein the setting device rectifies said time information with said determined value.

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45. (Amended Three Times) A music data processing method performed by a music data processing apparatus connecting to an external device via a public communications line, said method comprising the steps of:

- (a) receiving music data containing first time information from said external device via the public communications line;
- (b) judging whether said received music data is specific data or not;
- (c) rectifying said first time information by a predetermined value and setting the rectified first time information as second time information for the music data processing apparatus when said judging step judges said received music data is specific data and not setting the first time information as the second time information when said judging step judges said received data is not specific data;
- (d) temporarily storing said received music data; and
- (e) counting up the second time information periodically and processing the stored music data in accordance with said counted up second time information and the first time information contained in the music data to be processed.

46. (Amended Three Times) A storage medium storing a program, which a computer executes to realize a music data process for a music data processing apparatus connecting to an external device via a public communications line, comprising the instructions for:

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- (a) receiving music data containing first time information from said external device via the public communications line;
 - (b) judging whether said received music data is specific data or not;
 - (c) rectifying said first time information by a predetermined value and setting the rectified first time information as second time information for the music data processing apparatus when said judging step judges said received music data is specific data and not setting the first time information as the second time information when said judging step judges said received music data is not specific data;
 - (d) temporarily storing said received music data; and
 - (e) counting up the second time information periodically and processing the stored music data in accordance with said counted up second time information and the first time information contained in the data to be processed.

47. (Amended) A music data processing apparatus according to claim 29, wherein:
said receiver further receives recovery data for recovering music data not received due to a communications error, the recovery data containing third time information;
said memory further stores said received recovery data temporarily; and
said processor further processes said stored recovery data when said second time information reaches said third time information.

48. (Twice Amended) A music data processing apparatus according to claim 29, further comprising:

a checking device that checks a time sequential flow of music data temporarily stored in said memory; and

a remover that removes unnatural data from the flow of music data stored in said memory to prevent production of an unnatural musical tone, wherein

said music data temporarily stored in said memory contains data related to volume of a musical tone, and

said unnatural data is data which rapidly changes volume of a musical tone.

49. (Amended) A music data processing apparatus according to claim 41, wherein said specific data is initial data received from the external device.

50. (Amended) A music data processing method according to claim 33, wherein:

said receiving step further receives recovery data for recovering music data not received due to a communications error, the recovery data containing third time information;

said storing step further stores said received recovery data temporarily; and

said starting step further starts to process said stored recovery data when said second time information reaches said third time information.

51. (Twice Amended) A music data processing method according to claim 33, further comprising the steps of:

(f) checking a time sequential flow of data temporarily stored in said memory; and

(g) removing unnatural data from the flow of music data stored in said memory to prevent production of an unnatural musical tone, wherein

said music data temporarily stored in said memory contains data related to volume of a musical tone, and

said unnatural data is data which rapidly changes volume of a musical tone.

52. (Amended) A storage medium storing a program according to claim 37, wherein:

said receiving step further receives recovery data for recovering music data not received due to a communications error, the recovery data containing third time information;

said storing step further stores said received recovery data temporarily; and

said starting step further starts to process said stored recovery data when said second time information reaches said third time information.

53. (Amended) A storage medium storing a program according to claim 37, further comprising the instructions for:

(f) checking a time sequential flow of music data temporarily stored in said memory; and

(g) removing unnatural data from the flow of music data stored in said memory to prevent production of an unnatural musical tone, wherein

said music data temporarily stored in said memory contains data related to volume of a musical tone, and

said unnatural data is data which rapidly changes volume of a musical tone.
